

# PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION SCRIPT

This script is designed to be read out loud by the leader of this exercise. If you are planning to practice alone, read through the script ahead of time to become familiar with the content and process. The reading of the script will be difficult during the practice of Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR), but exact adherence to the script is not necessary. Once you are familiar with the exercise, feel free to modify it to fit your specific needs and comforts.

- 1 Find yourself a quiet place to relax, a place where you feel safe and are least likely to be disturbed by the sounds or presence of others. This is your time...a time for complete and utter relaxation.
- 2 For this relaxation, you can either sit or lie down. Just make sure that you are warm enough, and that you are reasonably comfortable. Let your hands rest loosely in your lap, or by your side. Now close your eyes.
- 3 Become aware of your breathing, and notice how your abdomen rises and falls with each breath...
- 4 Now take a long slow deep breath in through your nose, all the way down into your stomach. Hold the breath for just a moment, and then exhale through your mouth. Allow your breath to carry away all stress and tension as the air floods out of your lungs.
- 5 Take another slow breath in through your nose. Fill your lungs completely. Hold it for a moment...and release the breath through your mouth. Empty your lungs completely.
- 6 Take a third deep breath in. Hold it for a moment, and then let it go.
- 7 Feel that your body has already undergone a change. The tension in your body has begun to loosen and subside.
- 8 Now let your breathing rhythm return to normal...and relax....
- 9 During this relaxation, I will ask you to tense various muscles throughout your body. Please do this without straining. You do not need to exert yourself, just contract each muscle firmly but gently as you breathe in. If you feel uncomfortable at any time, you can simply relax and breathe normally.
- 10 Bring your awareness to your feet and toes. Breathe in deeply through your nose, and as you do, gradually curl your toes down and tense the muscles in the soles of your feet. Hold your breath for just a few seconds and then release the muscles in your feet as you breathe out. Feel the tension in your feet wash away as you exhale. Notice how different your feet feel when tensed and when they are relaxed.
- 11 Take another deep breath in again, tense the muscles in the soles of your feet and hold this position for a few seconds.
- 12 Now release. Feel yourself relaxing more and more deeply with each breath. Your whole body is becoming heavier, softer and more relaxed as each moment passes.

- 13 Take a deep breath in, and tense the muscles in your thighs. Hold for just a moment, and then release everything. As you do this, the blood flow to your muscles increases, and you may notice a warm tingling sensation. Enjoy this feeling of soothing relaxation in your thighs.
- 14 Again, breathe in deeply and tighten your thigh muscles. Hold for a moment. Now release. Focus on letting your muscles go limp and loose.
- 15 Draw in a nice deep breath and gradually tighten the muscles in your buttocks. Hold this contraction for a few seconds, and then release your breath. Feel the tension leaving your muscles. Feel them relaxing completely.
- 16 Once more, breathe in deeply and tighten the muscles in your buttocks. Hold for a moment. Now release them. You are becoming more and more deeply relaxed.
- 17 Take another breath, and this time, gradually tighten all the muscles in your legs, from your feet to your buttocks. Do this in whatever way feels natural and comfortable to you. Hold it...and now release all these large strong muscles. Enjoy the sensation of release as you become even more deeply relaxed.
- 18 Now bring your awareness to your stomach. Draw in a nice deep breath and then tighten these muscles. Imagine you are trying to touch your belly button to your spine. Now release your breath and let your muscles relax. Notice the sensation of relief that comes from letting go.
- 19 Once again, draw in a deep breath and then tighten your stomach muscles. Hold for a few seconds... and then let them relax as you exhale and release all tension.
- 20 Bring your awareness to the muscles in your back. As you slowly breathe in, arch your back slightly and tighten these muscles.... Now release your breath and let your muscles relax.
- 21 Again, draw in a deep breath and then tighten your back muscles. Hold for a few seconds...and then let them relax and release.
- 22 Now give your attention to your shoulder muscles and the muscles in your neck. As you slowly draw in a nice deep breath, pull your shoulders up towards your ears and squeeze these muscles firmly. Now breathe out completely, and allow your contracted muscles to go loose and limp.
- 23 Again, pull your shoulders up towards your ears and squeeze these muscles firmly.
- 24 Now feel the tension subside as you relax and breathe out.
- 25 Feel the heaviness in your body now. Enjoy the feeling. Feel yourself becoming heavier and heavier. Feel yourself becoming more and more deeply relaxed. You are calm, secure, and at peace.
- 26 Now it's time to let go of all the tension in your arms and hands. Let's start with your upper arms. As you breathe in, raise your wrists towards your shoulders and tighten the muscles in your upper arms. Hold that breath and that contraction for just a moment...and then gently lower your arms and breathe all the way out. You may feel a warm, burning sensation in your muscles when you tighten them. Feel how relaxing it is to release that tightness and to breathe away all the tension.